**Federal level participants**

Group work discussion minute: by **Zelalem**

**Facilitator**: Betru Nedassa (MERET)

**Note** **Taker**: Anteneh Zewdie (Abay Basin Authority)

**Participants**:

Anteneh Zewdie

Betru Nedassa

Yaco Wondimkun

Adane Kassa

Bogale

Belay

Andrea

Million

The groups discussed and agreed on the following issues about the current situation of RWM in the Abay River Basin:

* The highland or upstream area of the basin is highly degraded, low proactivity, high population and population pressure on natural resources, soil erosion and rain-fed agriculture
* The downstream is experiencing high flood, siltation, saturation,

The current practices to deal with the above situations agreed by the group are as follows:

* There are different projects and government programs that are dealing with the soil and water conservation activities (Eg. PSNP, MERET and SLM)
* There is currently a government body called Abay Basin Authority established to support MoA of the three regions (B/Gumuz, Oromia and Amhara) technically and financially. The ABA will work on developing a master plan and will propose policy for parliament, to also look into the knowledge management and lead the work of the watershed activities in the basin

There was an issue that was raised and agreed that though there are different projects and programs here and there, there is a need to have one body who will govern and lead the watershed plan in the Basin to harness the different projects and programs towards achieving a goal of rehabilitating the basin upstream and reduce siltation for the big dam.

ABA is estabilished to lead the watershed by piloting the sub-basin and will propose the plan to higher level-parliament

Institutions: different institutions and projects and unclear demarcation of mandate and lack of leading body to harness the different projects and regulate

* Abay Basin Authority
* MoA- NRM Directorate
* SLM – national guideline on watershed management
* EPA

Discussion around SLM and national watershed managemnt guideline:

* There is a clear implementation gap at local level/woreda level. There is lack of implementation capacity both financially and technically. The staff turnover and lack of appropriate incentives for those who are implementing the plans with the farmers
* All the woredas and watersheds are not yet covered

SLM2 is under preparation and it will cover less new woredas (90 woredas) than the SLM1 (135 woredas).